

Inouye Panel Will Probe CIA

By Bob Woodward

Washington Post Staff Writer

Sen. Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii) said yesterday that the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, which he chairs, will hold hearings beginning Jan. 10 on reports that the Central Intelligence Agency has conducted surveillance activities in the Pacific islands of Micronesia.

"As chairman," Inouye said, "I've found the results of a preliminary investigation into the news reports to be sufficiently significant to hold a hearing."

He declined to comment on the findings, but added, "I don't hold hearings and investigate if there isn't something there."

The hearing before the full committee will be a closed-door session be-

cause it potentially involves sensitive intelligence matters, according to Inouye. Invitations are being issued to various people to testify, he said, adding that "subpoenas will be issued if necessary."

Inouye said that the CIA has been responsive so far in answering questions from the committee staff about the Micronesian matter. "I hope to issue some kind of report after the hearing," he said. "This is poor and shows a lack of judgment at least."

The hearing will be the first by the permanent Senate intelligence oversight committee other than confirmation hearings. The committee was created in May to oversee intelligence activities and curtail abuses such as were investigated by the Senate's temporary intelligence committee chaired by Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho).

It was reported last week that the CIA had for several years been conducting electronic surveillance in Micronesia to learn the final negotiating position the island leaders would take in talks with the United States over future political status.

Government sources reported that the State Department has objected to the CIA surveillance in Micronesia on the ground that it is improper since the Micronesians could soon become U.S. citizens.

"The CIA has defended the surveillance, saying that it is the agency's proper role to gather intelligence abroad."

The sources said that the Justice Department has been asked to provide a legal opinion on the legality and propriety of CIA surveillance in a trust territory.

Surveillance in Micronesia

Micronesia is a group of 2,200 strategically located islands including the Marianas, the Carolines and the Marshalls. The United States has administered the islands under a U.N. trusteeship since World War II.

A government source said yesterday that the CIA has acknowledged to the Senate committee that it has been conducting covert surveillance in Micronesia. However, the source said that though the CIA had electronic surveillance equipment of some sort on the islands, the CIA maintains that it was never used.

Other government sources said that electronic surveillance was one of the methods used to obtain information on the Micronesian negotiating position.

Government agents engaged in surveillance activity often do not make

clear to their superiors the methods they use to obtain information.

F. Haydn Williams, the U.S. representative in Micronesian negotiations from 1971 until recently, has said he was not aware of any CIA surveillance activity on the islands.

Nonetheless, Williams said that he did receive regular intelligence reports from the State Department and its permanent representative on the islands.

In addition, Williams said that he is not surprised to learn that the United States "would use any means to find out the position of the other side."

Figuring in the Senate committee investigation, according to a government source, is a report published in March that Ruth Gilliam, a former correspondent for the Pacific Daily News, was recruited to gather intelligence in Palau, one of the Micronesian island groups.

Gilliam said that she was offered \$500 a month, trips to Japan for clandestine training and a secret radio transmitter-receiver for her work.

She said she was recruited by Robert A. Wiecha, who said he worked for U.S. naval intelligence. According to Gilliam, among other matters Wiecha wanted her to get information on was a Palauan delegate at the time Palau was threatening to secede from the U.S. trust territory and open separate status negotiations.

Wiecha hung up on reporters who contacted him by telephone at the time. A Navy spokesman said, "Mr. Wiecha is assigned on detached duty from the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations for mid- and long-range planning in the Western Pacific, and to research cultural, economic and political trends as they relate to the military."